

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJECT: TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE CASE--CIGAR ASSOCIA-
TION AND JAPANESE RESTRICTIONS ON CIGAR IMPORTS

REF: TOKYO 2422

1. SUMMARY: USDOC FORWARDING NEW CASE FOR TFC CONSIDERA-
TION CONCERNING JAPANESE RESTRICTIONS ON CIGAR IMPORTS,
WHICH ARE ESSENTIALLY SIMILAR TO THOSE CITED REFTEL ON
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CIGARETTE IMPORTS WITH EXCEPTION OF ADDITIONAL LIMITATIONS
ON THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF IMPORTED CIGARS. EMBASSY REQUESTED
TO RAISE SUBJECT CASE IN TFC AS AN ADDENDUM TO TFC CASE
NO. 5 OR AS A SEPARATE CASE, WHICHEVER IT DEEMS MOST
APPROPRIATE. END SUMMARY.

2. MICHAEL J. KOWALSKY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE CIGAR

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC. OF WASHINGTON, D.C. WROTE USDOC ON MARCH 3 (LETTER WITH EXPLANATORY ENCLOSURES BEING POUCHED TO EMBASSY) TO REQUEST THAT THE TFC CONSIDER RESOLVING JAPAN TOBACCO AND SALT CORPORATION (JTS) RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF CIGARS. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO RAISE THIS CASE AS AN ADDENDUM TO CASE NO. 5 ON CIGARETTES, GIVEN THAT THE BASIC TYPES OF JAPANESE TRADE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES ARE SIMILAR IN BOTH INSTANCES AND THAT THE SAME JAPANESE

GOVERNMENT-OWNED ENTITY (JTS) IS INVOLVED. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE UNIQUE RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTED CIGARS REGARDING SIZES AND SHAPES AS WELL AS A DIFFERENT COMPLAINANT, AND A DIFFERENT PRODUCT IS INVOLVED. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO CONSULT WITH GOJ ON WHETHER PROPOSED CASE SHOULD BE SUBSUMED UNDER CASE NO. 5 OR MADE A SEPARATE CASE.

3. IN SUMMARY, THE JAPANESE RESTRICTIONS ON CIGAR IMPORTS INVOLVE THE PRICING POLICIES OF JTS WHICH IN EFFECT RAISE THE PRICE OF IMPORTS BY ROUGHLY THE AMOUNT OF THE SCHEDULED 200 DUTY (WHICH IS NOT APPLIED), RESTRICTIONS ON DISTRIBUTION, AND LIMITATIONS ON SIZES AND SHAPES. MR. KOWALSKY INDICATES THAT IF EMBASSY HAS ANY TECHNICAL QUESTIONS ON THIS CASE, IT MAY CONTACT MURRAY VIGDEN, PRESIDENT OF INTER-CONTINENTAL TRADING CORPORATION, SHIBA, TOKYO (TEL. 583-3102). HIS FIRM IS A COMMISSION AGENT FOR IMPORTS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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AMERICAN CIGARS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST EMBASSY RAISE JAPANESE RESTRICTIONS ON CIGAR IMPORTS IN TFC AFTER DETERMINING WHETHER IT SHOULD BE ADDED TO CASE NO. 5 OR MADE A SEPARATE CASE.

5. FYI. USG OBJECTIVE IS INCREASED ACCESS TO THE JAPANESE CIGAR AND CIGARETTE MARKET. WE INTEND TO PURSUE THIS OBJECTIVE IN BOTH MTN AND TFC DISCUSSIONS. WE HAVE ALREADY TABLED REQUESTS OF JAPAN REGARDING THESE PRODUCTS IN THE MTN UNDER GROUP AGRICULTURE PROCEDURES. USG PURSUIT OF ITS GOALS THROUGH BOTH OF THESE AVENUES IS BEING CLOSELY COORDINATED IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS. END FYI. COOPER

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